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Testimony before the Public Safety & Child Day Care Centers
HB 6711 - An Act Concerning Communication Between Police and Child Day Care Centers
Testimony by Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director
Connecticut Parent Power
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Good afternoon, Senator Larson, Representative Dargon and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

I am Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director of Connecticut Parent Power a statewide parent-led organization that engages, educates and mobilizes diverse parents from across the state to act on issues that matter most to them improving outcomes for all children in areas of early childhood, care, education, health care reform and K-12 school systems.

Connecticut Parent Power works hand in hand with collaborative statewide partners such as the Connecticut Association for Human Services, Connecticut Voices for Children, the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance and All Our Kin whom all support HB 6711 - An Act Concerning Communication between Police and Child Day Care Centers.

As you may know, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation process is one of the most highly respected efforts in the nation regarding the application and modeling of best practices in our early childhood settings, whom also require programs to have preventive emergency procedures to be in place.

Therefore, we have identified a dire need to open up a two-way communication effort as we know our early childhood providers are constantly looking to work alongside our community partners to ensure that all our youngest children are safe and sound at all times. Unfortunately, there is a present disconnect with our providers and our police department.

Presently, there is no shared open and intentional effort of communication with our providers and police department to be notified of any emergent danger in a community (i.e., as providers may be on a nature or community walk with a group of children or can be simply playing outside in the play area and/or arrival/dismissal of children), which possess an immediate threat to something happening with little or no planning time to act preventively to ensure our children and families are never vulnerable to a critical mishap or oversight in their community.



Consequently, planning needs to have open lines of communication on both ends, to keep our children safe and sound with effective and efficient turn around times that keep an emergency situation in control and with minimal risks to early childhood children and their families.

First and foremost, our community public safety departments should know where and how to communicate with their early childhood facilities to prepare and inform each staff of any localized activity that works with our children and families to ensure the well-being of all in diverse places and spaces.

As you know, public schools already have such a system in place in case of an emergency within the parameters of their facilities (i.e., through the use of email blasts, calling trees, text alerts, etc.), which should be afforded as a cost effective preventive step with our early care and education providers.

Connecticut Parent Power believes in solution-based structures with integrated best practices that keep our children safe from any and all harm. Therefore, we are hoping that you can join us in sharing our vision in building upon our collective approach/impact on the greater good of our whole community by implementing and supporting HB 6711 – An Act Concerning Communication Between Police and Child Day Care Centers, to plan ahead and prevent any harm that may be caused by not intentionally planning preventive efforts collaboratively to keep our most precious, our youngest children safe.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify in addressing this public safety issue that we can certainly prevent in the near future!